



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
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April 6, 2005

OPERATION KRYPTONITE DRAWS TO A CLOSE

United States Attorney Johnny Sutton and **Federal Bureau of Investigation Special Agent in Charge Ralph Diaz** announced today that the 39 month Operation Kryptonite investigation and prosecution is drawing to a close. Beginning in late 2001, the El Paso FBI and Police Department began an investigation regarding the correlation between "RAVE" parties in the El Paso area and the sale and distribution of illegal "club drugs".

"Club drugs such as ecstasy and crystal methamphetamine are highly addictive and often deadly," stated U.S. Attorney Johnny Sutton. "Operation Kryptonite has put many drug dealers in federal prison. This case should be a real wake up call to parents in the El Paso Community that these dangerous drugs are here and in large quantities. Parents need to educate themselves and their kids about these vicious drugs."

On December 21, 2001, a joint undercover operation involving the FBI and the EPPD was conducted at one of these events entitled "The Gift". As a result, 12 people attending the event were arrested for possession of a controlled substance and manufacture and delivery of a controlled substance involving ecstasy, psilocybin (mushrooms) and marijuana.

As a result of "The Gift" operation, the FBI initiated an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) investigation - Operation Kryptonite because it was believed that these RAVE events were being used as conduits for the sale and distribution of designer drugs. The goal of Operation Krypto Nite was to target mid-to-high level ecstasy dealers operating in the El Paso, Texas area. The investigation identified distribution cells in Cd. Juarez, Mexico and other parts of the United States including Denver, Phoenix, Albuquerque, Austin, Indianapolis and New York.

All told, the investigation identified over 40 subjects and seized approximately 43,000 ecstasy pills, 7 pounds of crystal methamphetamine, 1 pound of methamphetamine and over 400 pounds of marijuana. The street value of the seized drugs totals approximately \$1.64 million. To date, the investigation has resulted in 26 federal indictments, 1 U.S. Military Court Martial, 24 federal arrests and 12 state arrests. Of those indicted, 17 have been sentenced to a total of 832 months in federal prison. There are currently 4 fugitives from justice who are believed to be in Mexico.

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Drug Enforcement Administration, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Texas Department of Public Safety, El Paso Police Department, University of Texas El Paso Police Department, and the El Paso Community College Police Department, United States Army Criminal Investigation Division. Assistant United States Attorney Kristal Wade prosecuted this case on behalf of the Government.

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